

REMARKS

Claims 1-14 are pending in the application. In the present Response, claims 1 - 3 are amended. No new matter has been added.

ALLOWED CLAIMS

Applicants thank the Examiner for indicating that claims 6 - 14 are allowed, and for indicating that claims 3 – 5 are objected to, but that each would be allowable if rewritten to include all of the limitations of base claim 1 and any intervening claims. Applicants amend claim 3 to include the limitations of claims 1 and 2, and respectfully submit that amended claim 3 is thereby allowable. As claims 4 and 5 depend from allowable claim 3, Applicants further submit that claims 4 and 5 are allowable for at least this reason. Accordingly, Applicants respectfully request that the objections as to claims 3 – 5 be withdrawn.

REJECTION UNDER 35 U.S.C. § 103

Claim 1 is rejected under 35 U.S.C. § 103(a) as being unpatentable over U.S. Patent No. 5, 206,858 to Nakano et al. Claim 2 is rejected under 35 U.S.C. § 103(a) as being unpatentable over Nakano in view of U.S. Patent No. 5,703,878 to Duault. Applicants amend claims 1 and 2 to clarify the nature of their invention, and respectfully traverse these rejections.

In amended independent claim 1, Applicants disclose an interface apparatus in a communication network for converting a frame which has been received from a digital transmission line and has overhead and a payload, to ATM cells, assembling a frame using ATM cells that have been received from and ATM network, and sending the assembled frame to a digital transmission line. The interface apparatus includes: a) cell conversion zone specifying

means for specifying, as a cell conversion zone, the portion of a frame that contains the payload and a first pointer of the overhead that indicates each of the starting positions of plural data blocks that have been multiplexed into the frame, and generating a signal that specifies the cell conversion zone, b) pointer creation means which, when a predetermined position in the cell conversion zone is adopted as a reference position, is for creating a second pointer that specifies this reference position, and c) cell conversion means for converting data in the cell conversion zone to cells based upon the signal that specifies the cell conversion zone, and for including said the pointer in a prescribed cell.

Nakano discloses a transmission method and apparatus for STS-1 frame configuration. Like Applicants' claimed invention, Nakano discloses a first pointer that is used for indicating a first data block position in a virtual container (see, e.g., FIG. 4 of Nakano). However, Nakano fails in addition to disclose or suggest Applicants' claimed second pointer for specifying a reference position. The Examiner suggests that Nakano discloses a basis for determining the reference position (e.g., the first bit position of the virtual container). However, unlike Applicants, Nakano fails to provide that a second pointer distinct from Applicants claimed first pointer is supplied for indicating this position. Applicants' approach provides an advantage, for example, in providing a means for specifying a reference position that specifies a reference position for STS-N frames where N is an integer greater than 1. While Dault discloses AAL Type-1 headers of P-type and non-P type, Nakano and Dault in combination fails to disclose or suggest Applicants claimed second pointer in addition to Applicants' claimed first pointer for specifying a reference position for STS-N frames where N is an integer greater than 1.

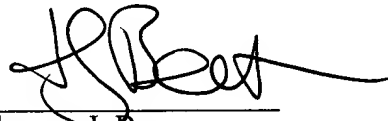
Accordingly, Applicants respectfully submit that amended claim 1 is allowable over the cited references. As amended claim 2 depends from amended claim 1, Applicants further submit that amended claim 2 is allowable for at least this reason.

CONCLUSION

In view of the amendments and set forth above, this application is in condition for allowance which action is respectfully requested. However, if for any reason the Examiner should consider this application not to be in condition for allowance, the Examiner is respectfully requested to telephone the undersigned attorney at the number listed below prior to issuing a further Action.

Any fee due with this paper may be charged to Deposit Account No. 50-1290.

Respectfully submitted,



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